

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, GR, RO

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER MACOVESCU VISIT TO ATHENS

REF: ATHENS 1689

1. SUMMARY. GREEK PRESS GAVE PROMINENT NEWS MEDIA ATTENTION TO FIVE-DAY VISIT (THREE OFFICIAL DAYS OF APPOINTMENTS) OF ROMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, GEORGE MACOVESCU, FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 3. PERVASIVE THEME WAS ROMANIAN AND GREEK CONSENSUS ON NEED FOR PROMPT AND JUST SETTLEMENT OF CYPRUS CRISIS. A FEW SECONDARY AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED AND MORE BILATERAL TALKS WERE PROMISED. IN FINAL COMMUNIQUE BITSIOS THANKED MACOVESCU FOR PROPOSAL OF BALKAN CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS BUT GOG DID NOT COMMENT OR ENDORSE THIS IDEA. NOR WAS ROMANIAN SUGGESTION TO DENUCLEARIZE BALKANS INCLUDED IN COMMUNIQUE. REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST, BOTH FOREIGN MINISTERS TILTERED TOWARD PALESTINIAN CLAIMS. END SUMMARY.

2. AS IN CASE PRECEEDING VISITS OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER AND
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HIGH LEVEL YUGOSLAV AND BULGARIAN OFFICIALS, GOG PROMOTED PRESENCE

OF ROMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER IN GREECE AS EVIDENCE THAT GREEK POSITION IN CYPRUS ENJOYS EXTENSIVE WORLD SUPPORT AND THAT GREEK DIPLOMACY HAS OPTIONS AND PROSPECTS IN FRESH DIRECTIONS. THE OFFICIAL INTERVIEWS, TOASTS, PROTOCOL VISITS AND CEREMONIES, AND COMMUNIQUE ATTENDANT TO MACOVESCU'S VISIT WERE WELL PUBLICIZED TO GREEK NATION.

3. MACOVESCU UPON ARRIVAL SOUNDED THEME, WHICH RECURRENT THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT, THAT ROMANIA HAS BEEN PLAYING USEFUL ROLE TO COOL OFF CYPRUS CRISIS AND THAT BALKAN COUNTRIES IN MULTILATERAL CONTEXT HAVE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO MAKE TOWARD PEACE IN MEDITERRANEAN AREA. IN FINAL COMMUNIQUE GREEK FOREIGN MINISTER THANKED MACOVESCU FOR HIS IDEA THAT BALKAN CONFERENCE ON CYPRUS BE CONVENED BUT BITSIOS DID NOT COMMENT ON PROPOSAL. JOINT COMMUNIQUE EMPASIZED ANXIETY THAT TWO MINISTERS FEEL OVER CYPRUS, THEIR DESIRE FOR DRASTIC EFFORTS TO BE MADE FOR A "POLITICAL, CONTINUOUS AND JUST ARRANGEMENT IN THE PROBLEM OF CYPRUS... SETTING ASIDE ANY UNILATERAL MEASURE WHICH IS AIMED AT CREATING A FAIT ACCOMPLI," AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR UN RESOLUTION 3212.

4. MIDDLE EAST SECTION OF COMMUNIQUE CONVEYS IMPLICIT CRITICISM OF ISRAELI TERRITORIAL GAINS AT EXPENSE OF ARABS, "ACQUISITION OF LAND BY FORCE IS INADMISSABLE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS," AND EMPHASIZED RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS TO POLITICAL EQUITY IN SETTLEMENT, UNDERLINING "NECESSITY FOR A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD RESPECT THE LAWFUL RIGHTS OF ALL NATIONAL IN THE AREA AND WOULD GUARANTEE THE NATIONAL EXISTENCE AND LAWFUL RIGHTS OF THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE." (COMMENT. THE LOGIC UNDERSCORES SEEMINTLY PARALLEL CLAIMS THAT GREEK CYPRIOTS MAY MAKE AGAINST TURKISH OCCUPATION OF PART OF CYPRUS BUT, MOREOVER, MAY REPRESENT GOG ATTEMPT TO ALIGN MORE WITH ARABS, A DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE WHICH PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION HAS ACCUSED CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS TO BE SLACK IN PURSUING).

5. AS WITH THE EARLIER YUGOSLAV AND BULGARIAN MINISTERS' VISITS, THE ROMANIAN-GREEK DETENTE, AFTER THE PRO FORMA CYPRUS REFERENCE, CONSISTED OF INITIALLING A FEW MINOR AGREEMENTS. ON THIS OCCASION, THEY DEALT WITH EXCHANGE VISITS BY SCIENTISTS, VETERINARY PROBLEMS, CONSULAR MATTERS, AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS. MFA OFFICIAL SAID MOST OF THE AGREEMENTS HAD ACTUALLY BEEN ARRANGED IN 1971. FINAL COMMUNIQUE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROMISED THAT PROPOSAL TO OPEN CONSULATES GENERAL IN THESSALONIKI AND CONSTANZA WOULD BE SHORTLY ADDRESSED; IT ALSO INSERTED, WITHOUT EXPLANATION, THAT "MATTER OF COOPERATION FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF GREEK

PETROLEUM" WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN AN INTERMINISTERIAL MEETING THIS AUTUMN (IN ATHENS). A ROMANIAN THEME THAT BALKAN COOPERATION SHOULD INCLUDE REGIONAL DENUCLEARIZATION WAS NOT SECONDED FROM THE GREEK SIDE. LASTLY, BOTH CARAMANLIS AND BITSIOS HAVE ACCEPTED

INVITATIONS TO VISIT ROMANIA AT SOME UNSPECIFIED FUTURE
OPPORTUNITY.

6. THE IMPRESSION OF WIDENING BALKAN DIPLOMACY AND DETENTE WAS
HEIGHTENED BY GLOWING SIMULTANEOUS PRESS REPORTS FROM SOFIA WHICH
COINCIDED WITH THE ROMANIAN FONMIN'S VISIT. THESE NEWS REPORTS FROM
SOFIA EMPHASIZED THE FRIENDLY POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION
EVIDENCED IN INTERMINISTERIAL TALKS CONDUCTED BY GREEK ALTERNATE
MINISTER OF COORDINATION JOHN BOUTOS IN BULGARIA.
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